To promote Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life; to interpret the spiritual and religious values inhere in the processes of agriculture and the relationships of rural life; to magnify and dignify the church; to provide a means of fellowship and cooperation among rural agencies: *Toward a Christian Civilization.*"

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THE PULPIT AND THE PLOW*

By Calvin T. Schnucker

Except that they come from a common source, the Pulpit and the Plow, on the rface, have little in common. However, we shall see that they have and must con- ue to have an undreamed of kinship in order that both may continue to exist. The pit may and can exist only as the plow permits. The plow permits only as the pit contributes to the whole of life. For once in our lives we don't need to gue about which had priority--the Pulpit or the Plow. In the second chapter of nesis we read:

> "And no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up, for there was not a man to till the ground. So Jehovah God planted a garden eastward in Eden; there he put the man whom he had formed....to dress it and to keep it....Jehovah God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought forth them unto man to see what he would call them; and whatsoever the man called every living creature that was the name thereof."

Historically speaking the plow and the pulpit pioneered together. Almost as on as the plow turned over its first furrow, the pulpit spoke with the authority of d. Kingdoms were conquered, nations were born, races were civilized, life devel- ed, all by the kinship and the cooperation of the pulpit and the plow.

When men were in dire need of leadership, from the realm of the plow God called rth His leaders. So came Moses from the land of Midian to free God's enslaved peo- le from the Egyptians. So was called David from the sheep folds of his father where a boy he had protected the sheep from the ravishes of wild animals, where he learn- the rhythm and the life of the great out-of-doors, to establish firmly the Kingdom Israel and prepare the way to build the great temple. So was called Amos from he farms and simple industries to warn a fallen nation against their transgressions nd to call them to repentance. So was sent Jesus to be raised in the home of a rker in wood and stone to save mankind from sin for service. So was called Martin ther from the mines of Germany to break the shackles of a spiritually enslaving atholicism. So was called Ulrich Zwingle from the heart of peasantry to intellec- ualize the Reformation. Down through the ages God called forth his leaders from the heep folds, the farms, the workers in stone and wood, the lakes, and the mines.

Here I might produce many columns of statistics and summaries of figures proving hat the leaders in religion, education, science, philosophy, and industry have come

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n address delivered by the Rev. Calvin T. Schnucker, Professor of Rural Church in he Theological Seminary of the University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa, at the service eld in connection with the opening of the fall quarter, August 31, 1943. Mr. chnucker is also the Program Director and Treasurer of the Iowa Christian Rural ellowship.

in a constant stream from the land, influenced by the plow and the pulpit. Palestin Asia Minor, Ethiopia, Greece, Rome, Spain, England, Germany, France, Scandanavia,-- a constant procession until with its influence it reached America. Here in our own land the story of the pulpit and the plow has become history. Men forged westward; Pioneer Farmer, Pioneer Preacher, side by side they wrote the saga of the most pheno enal accomplishment ever ascribed to the industry of man. WORK, SWEAT, EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT,--DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, SWEAT, AND WORK--the Pulpit and the Plow--the Plow and the Pulpit--and out of this vast wilderness came order, farms, towns, citie industries, professions, the wagon, the steam boat, locomotives, trains, autos, air- planes, electricity, radio, television, great men, great ideals, great passions, gre advancement. They were marching together: the Pulpit and the Plow--the Plow and th Pulpit.

BUT WAIT! There were other civilizations; there were other cultures--Phoenicia, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Spain, what of these? Here is a poem that will tell their story. It is entitled

THE SONG OF THE PLOW

It was I who built Chaldea and the cities of the Plain;
I was Greece and Rome and Carthage and the opulence of Spain.
When their courtiers walked in scarlet and their queens wore
chains of gold,
And forgot 'twas I that made them, growing Godless folk and
bold,
I went over them in judgment, and again my cornfields stood
Where empty courts bowed homage in obsequious multitude,....
For the nation that forgets me, in that hour her doom is sealed
By judgment as from Heaven that can never be repealed.

WHY? The answer is simple enough. All industry no matter how complex is based upon the life which flows around the natural resources which God created--agricultur and mining. So long as the pulpit speaks the language of the plow there is contin- uous progress, the moment the pulpit forsakes the reality of the axis for the off- shoots dancing on the periphery of life, progress ceases, the pulpit falls into dis- repute, and the plow again goes over it in judgment. In other words, the basic phil osophy which undergirds all of life is the rural philosophy. Jesus recognized this throughout His spoken teachings. When people get away from this basic way of life and substitute an artificial philosophy, both they and their institutions suffer indescribably.

The phenomenal progress which America has accomplished with its all but unbe- lievable contributions to civilization were made during a period in which the pulpit and the plow labored side by side; the plow cultivating the land to fabulous fertil- ity--the pulpit inspiring man to fabulous accomplishments.

Always when men begin to consider the Lever and the Wheel as the ultimate in attainment, forgetting that basically the earth has produced the lever and the wheel they begin to suffer. Disunity, disease, and war cast down the pedestal which they have erected--when the pulpit forsakes the plow in favor of the glamor of the fin- ished wheel, religion falls into disrepute and men's new towers of Babel begin to dot the land.

Thank God, America recognized her danger before her really dark hour was upon her. Religious leaders all over this land have at last realized into what jeopardy

Our Christian institutions have fallen because the pulpit to a great extent has forsaken the plow--or more accurately speaking, the pulpit has adopted the language and the style of the finished wheel and lever, it has erected a stone wall between itself and the plow.

Voices are arising all over--denominationally, interdenominationally, and independently pointing the way of progress back to the plow.

Christendom in America may hope to make progress today and tomorrow only in direct proportion to its meeting the new rural challenge. The country which has produced by three to one all of the great leaders in every field, the country which keeps all people alive, the country which alone reproduces the species and populates the earth, this country, because the pulpit forsook the plow, has gradually forgot the language of God and has gradually slipped into an immunizing paganism.

It may be the churches' number one job to plan a just and durable Christian peace when this war is over--however, it won't even reach first base unless it first meets the challenge of the country. This is a three-fold challenge.

First, it is an individual challenge. The young man preparing for the Christian ministry is easily intrigued by the large institutional church. He thinks of himself as a great leader in the church, as a sort of captain of industry. The glamor and magnetism of the picture often prove fatal to him. The small town and country churches are stepping stones to the great cathedral, so he reasons. A few months ago, a young man, a graduate of this institution, was in my office, complaining about the limited use of a rural church. "Why," said he, "my church can have activities only on Sunday. I want to get out of there and find a nice city church that has some activity."

The disease which has attacked theological students today is the almost fatal one of followitis. They desire to step into the footsteps of a man who has set up a real going institution, all they want to do is carry on--no vision, no pioneering spirit, no willingness to sacrifice.

The challenge of the rural church to the individual today is one of development--young man, dream your dreams--then set about developing them. Don't look to some great institutional church for the culmination of your dreams. Take the place you have and make of it the church you want. Most of our small town and country churches can be developed into the type of church most of us would love to serve--if as pastors we have vision, determination, and the pioneering spirit. If we can inspire you to dedicate your life to some abused or undeveloped area and to lead you to build in that area the kind of church that will please the Master, serve the community, and satisfy your dreams, then we will have accomplished the first step necessary to sound theological training. For once again in your area the pulpit and the plow will present a united front and streams of leadership will flow into all areas of life.

Secondly, the challenge of the country is a denominational challenge. It is true that denominations are increasingly becoming concerned about Christianity's first line: the rural area. Despite that growing concern, the philosophy which undergirds denominational advance and action is specifically urban.

This denominational concern must deal with more than the physical plants of rural churches and the salaries of rural pastors. It is time, high time, that denominations crawl out of the shell of figures and statistics to discover that people with souls live in the country. May I quote from Doctor Henry C. Taylor of the Farm Foundation,

"The religious discipline that I have been living under takes the position that the function of Christianity is to save individuals and help them adjust themselves to the environing world. It seems to me that it is the primary function of the denomination to bring into the community and to individuals of the community the teaching that will make sure that economic motives are supplemented with religious motives and a desire for justice. The economist may develop a clear vision of what the forces are, but for solving the problems we must turn to religion."

Each rural area must become a primary concern to the denomination which operates within the area. Each problem that arises within the area, too large for the individual church to meet, must become of vital concern to the denomination. In other words the denomination must stop being a machine and must become an understanding soul.

Thirdly, the challenge of the country is an educational challenge. For a goodly number of years the practical areas of theological education have received their inspiration and their teaching material from the large, renowned church of the city. Whatever methods were taught in Christian education and other practical theology courses were based upon the large educational church plant. The average seminarian was never able to apply the instruction given him in his seminary when called into his first parish. This type of education gave birth to the stepping-stone idea from small town and country church to the urban area. During the last ten years much talking and counselling have been going on. Seminary curricula must be changed to fit our circumstances. Our philosophies must become rural and basic. Our courses must point the student to the average church and to the rural challenge.

Because of this, both denominations and seminaries have concluded that it would be a real step forward to integrate a part of the theological curriculum with that of some well known agriculture college. The agricultural colleges were very cooperative and set courses of study which would be helpful. However, at first the seminaries were loathe to make use of these. Yet their success depended upon the first move coming from the seminaries. At first this potential relationship had disappointingly few acceptances. But now the attitude has changed; several seminaries, known throughout the land for their spirit of pioneering, for the constant stream of consecrated teachers, missionaries, and pastors that have gone out into all the world, and for their foresight to future events have taken definite steps in their curricula and their relationship to landgrant colleges to bring the pulpit and the plow together. This seminary is numbered among them.

Together we shall again consider the source of power and leadership; the strengthening and character producing influences of the hills and the valleys, the lakes and the rivers, the birds and the beasts, the trees and the plants shall be interpreted by Christian, consecrated leaders to receptive men.

Once again we shall call forth strong leaders for our nation from the field and the woods; we shall produce a people armed with the weapons of Christian warfare, we shall give the world the leadership she needs to bring a just and durable peace, we shall send forth men who will contribute to Protestantism's basic interpretations of life as did Luther and Calvin in the period of the Reformation.

Once again shall labor--The Pulpit and The Plow--together!

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